

REMARKS

The above-captioned patent application has been carefully reviewed in light of the non-final Office Action to which this Amendment is responsive. Claims 1, 4, 10 and 11 have been amended in an effort to further clarify and particularly point out the apparatus and method of the above-captioned application. Claim 9 has been canceled. In addition, the specification and drawings have been amended to place the application in an allowable condition.

Claims 1-15 are pending in the above-captioned application. Claims 1-8 and 11 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Johnston et al. (U.S. Patent 6,877,123). Claim 10 has been rejected as anticipated under 35 USC §102(b) by Ahanin et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,285,153). The Examiner has also rejected Claim 10 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, and objected to the specification and Claims 1, 4 and 10. The Examiner has also objected to the drawings. Reconsideration is respectfully requested based on the amended specification, claims and drawings, as well as the following discussion.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowability of Claims 9 and 12-15 over the prior art of record. The subject matter of Claim 9 relating to the storage element has now been incorporated into each of independent Claims 1 and 4. In addition, the subject matter of Claim 9 has also been added to Claim 10, which has now been redrafted as an independent claim. As a result, it is believed that the prior art rejections under Section 102 of Claims 1-8 and 10 are rendered moot. Withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

As to the Section 102 rejection of Claim 11, Applicant has amended independent Claim 11 in an effort to further clarify the recited method. To that end, steps have been added in which: i) the first block having the first scan test circuit receives a first scan selection signal that is synchronized with the second clock and indicates switching timing between normal operation and scan test operation of the first scan test circuit;

and ii) the second block receives a second scan selection signal that is synchronized with the first clock and indicates switching timing between normal operation and scan test operation of the second scan test circuit.

Claim 11 stands rejected based on Johnston et al. This primary reference fails to include or suggest the above recited features that are now provided in amended Claim 11. Likewise, it is not apparent that these features would have been readily apparent to one of sufficient (i.e., ordinary) skill in the field of the invention. Therefore, it is believed that this reference fails to anticipate under the Statute. Support is found for the amended matter. See Figs. 13 and 15, for example, as well as the specification at paragraphs [0115 – 0131]. Therefore, it is believed no new matter has been added.

With regard to the Section 112 rejections, Applicant has redrafted Claim 10 as an independent method claim in an effort to overcome the indefiniteness issues raised by the Examiner, as well as the objection noted under 37 CFR §1.75(c). It is believed this claim now more clearly and distinctly defines the subject matter regarded by Applicant as the invention. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

As to the objections noted under 37 CFR §1.75 (i), each of the independent Claims 1 and 4 have been amended to set forth the plurality of apparatus elements and method steps in separately indented paragraphs and to remove parenthetical matter in favor of rewording to properly define and clarify the terminology used therein. No new matter has been added

A corrected Replacement drawing sheet for Fig. 8 is further attached pursuant to 37 CFR §1.121(d), correcting the typographical error at box 800, as noted by the Examiner.

The specification has also been amended at page 31, paragraph [0118], to correct the informalities noted by the Examiner. No new matter has been added.

Finally, Applicant will submit an English translated copy of the priority document under separate cover in order to perfect the §119 claim previously made on December 12, 2003. A certified copy of the Japanese priority document was submitted at that time. Applicant apologizes for any inconvenience.

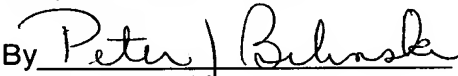
In summary and in view of the above amendment, Applicant believes the above-captioned application is now in a condition for allowance and an expedited Notice of Allowability is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner wishes to expedite disposition of the above-captioned patent application, he is invited to contact Applicant's representative at the telephone number below.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 50-0289, under Order No. 967-038 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: June 29, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By 

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Attachments

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheet(s) of drawings includes changes to Fig. 8.

Attachment: Replacement sheet